

# CLAIM

A SONG OF IRE AND VICE

#1 OF 4



ALMES WRIGHT DIMITRIEVSKI BIRCH



DEEP WATER  
GAMES





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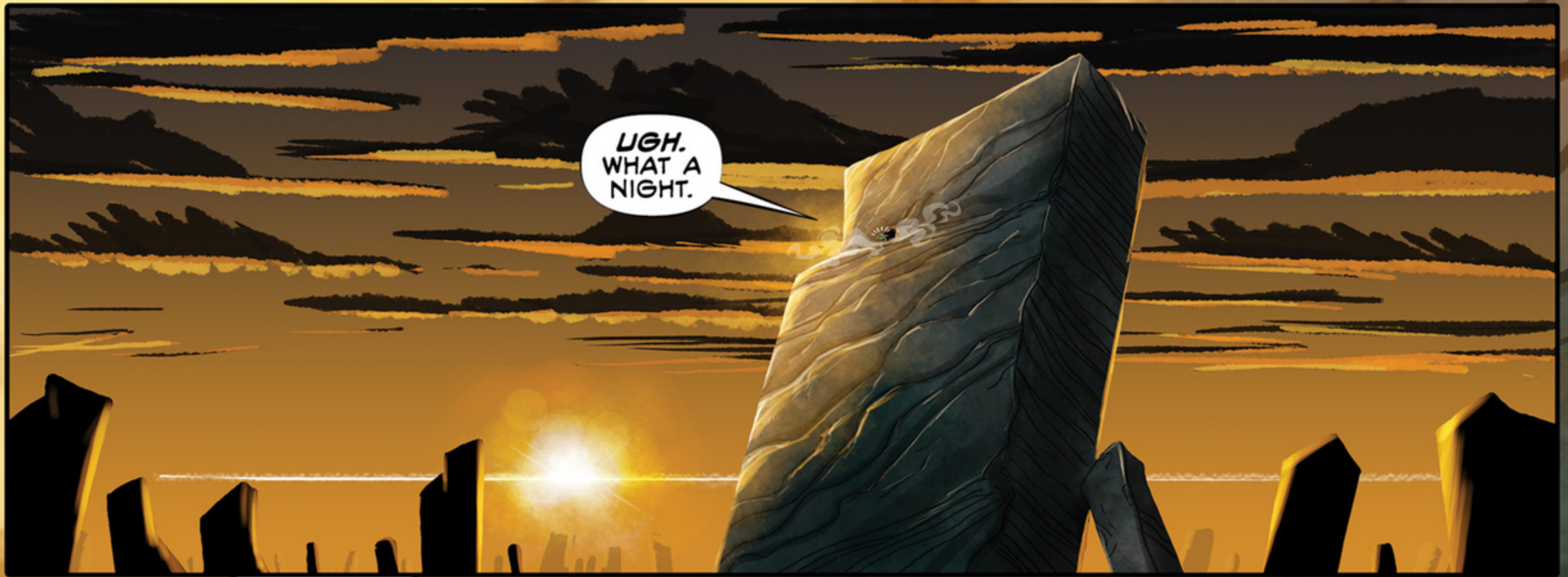
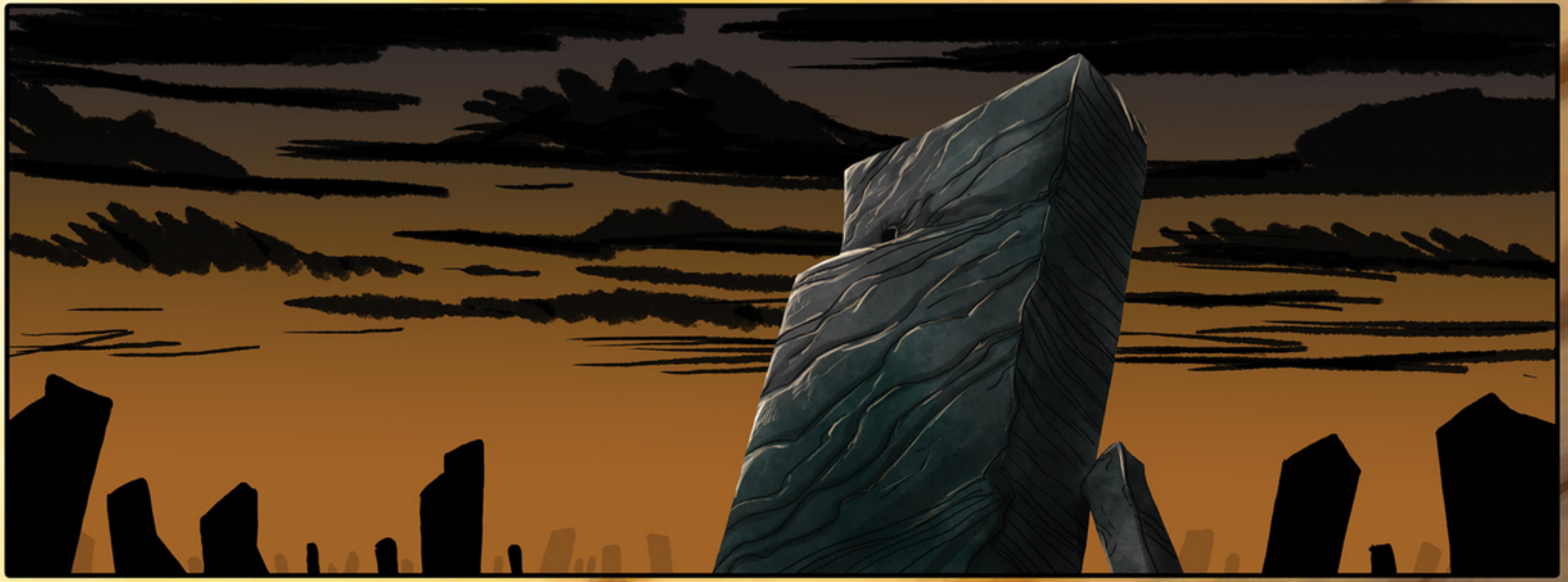
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UGH.  
WHAT A  
NIGHT.

BUT  
AT LEAST WE  
GET TO SEE THIS  
PRETTY *SUNRISE*,  
RIGHT?

...

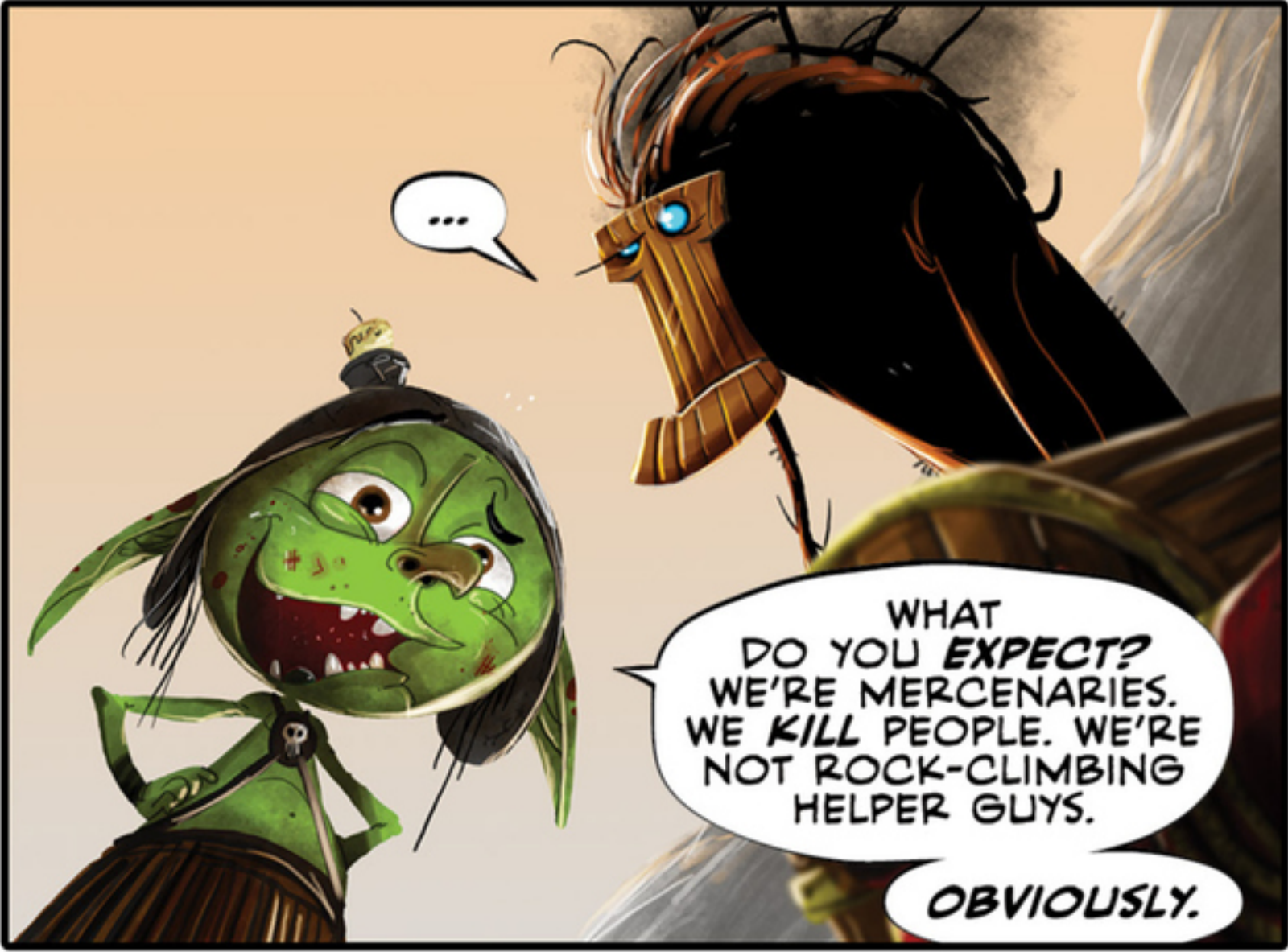
YEAH, YEAH,  
YEAH. SUNRISES  
DON'T *PAY*  
THE *BILLS*.

**ROB GOBLIN:**  
SAVAGE  
MERCENARY. SHORT.  
INCOMPETENT. LOUD.

**DOP:**  
SHAPE-SHIFTING  
MERCENARY. TALL.  
INCOMPETENT. QUIET.

HEY,  
YOU TWO  
*LOSERS!*









BUT HE'LL KILL YOU!

IRREGARDLESS! WE DON'T WORK FOR FREE!

...

I KNOW, I KNOW. I GOT THIS. I'M A MASTER NEGOTIATOR...



KLUNK

MONEY DOESN'T MATTER IF YOU'RE DEAD!

EXACTO. SO HURRY UP AND AGREE TO PAY US MORE!



HOW STUPID CAN THESE DUMMIES BE?



GRRRRR...

OKAY, OKAY, I'LL PAY YOU! SAVE ME!



WHATEVER. YOU'RE NOT DEAD. I'M NOT DEAD.

I HANDLED IT. I'M A GENIUS.



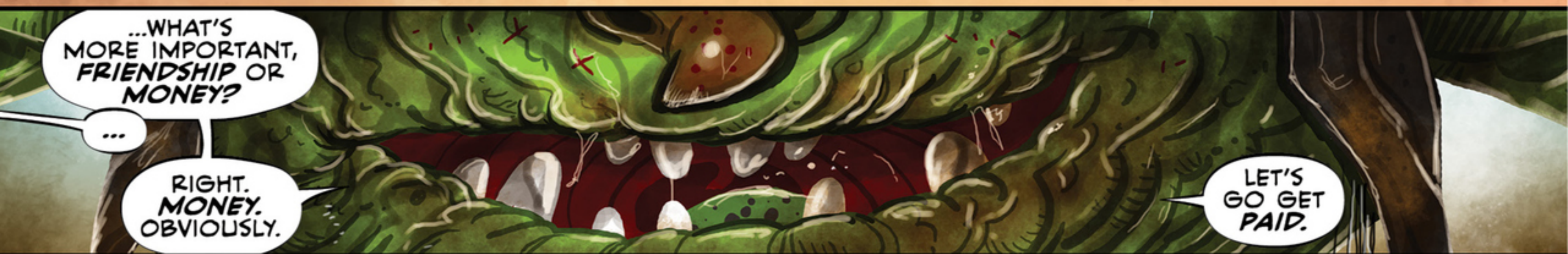


COME ON,  
YOU TWO!  
**HUSTLE UP!**  
HURRY!

DON'T  
YOU WANT  
TO SAVE ME?  
AREN'T WE  
**FRIENDS?**



WE'VE *NEVER*  
BEEN FRIENDS,  
LORD GOURD. BUT  
YOU RAISE A  
PROVUNCATIVE  
QUESTION...



...WHAT'S  
MORE IMPORTANT,  
**FRIENDSHIP OR**  
**MONEY?**  
...

RIGHT.  
**MONEY.**  
OBSOULETLY.

LET'S  
GO GET  
**PAID.**



**WHAM**

GO, DOP!  
**DOPPELGANGER**  
HIM UP!



OOH, DOP,  
BUDDY, WE DON'T  
GET PAID IF YOU  
**LOSE**. ALSO, IF  
YOU'RE **EQUAL**,  
HOW IS HE  
**WINNING?**

NO FAIR!  
HOW IS HE  
**BEATING**  
US?

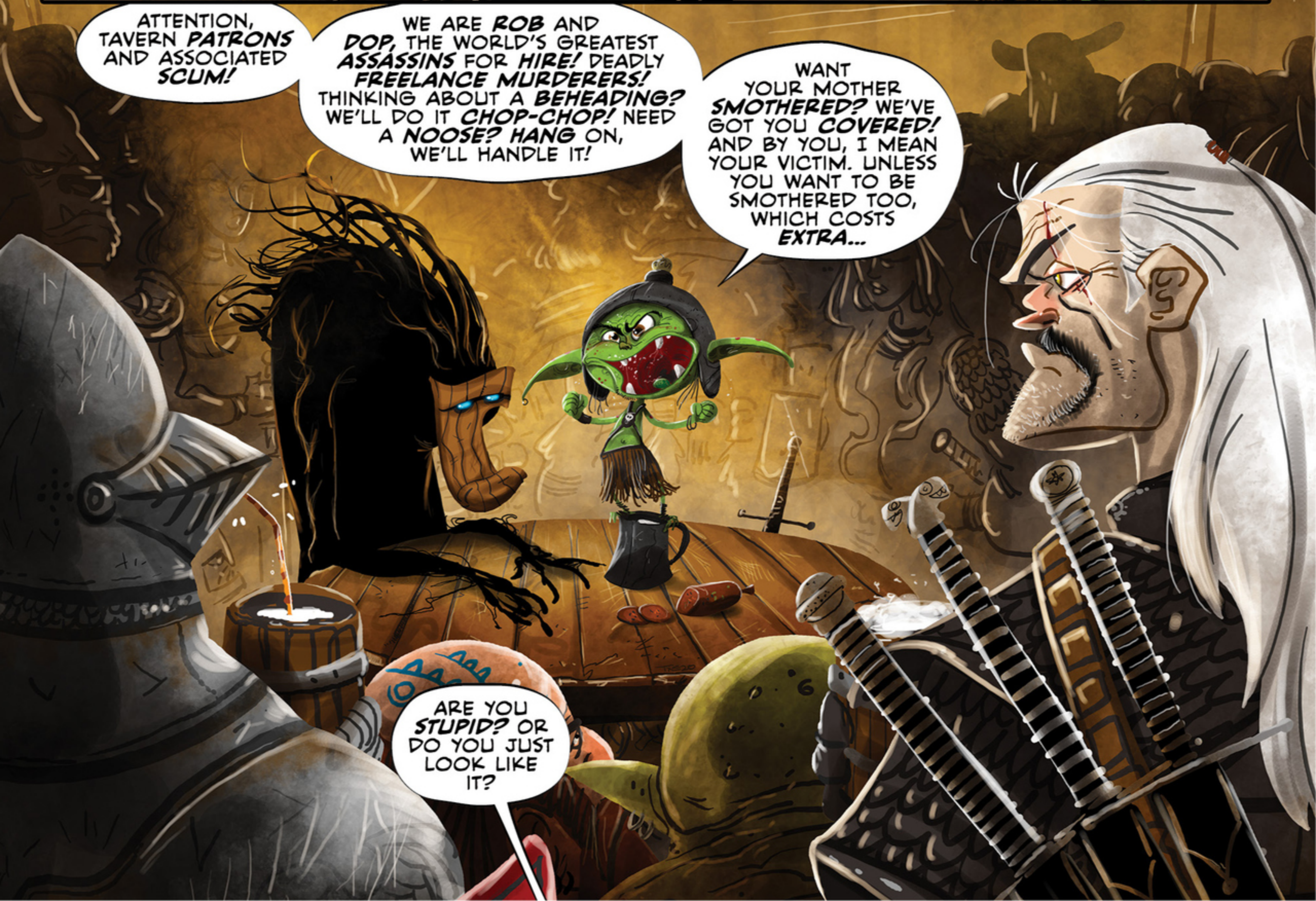
IS HE  
BEATING US?  
DOP, IS THAT  
**YOU?**

...

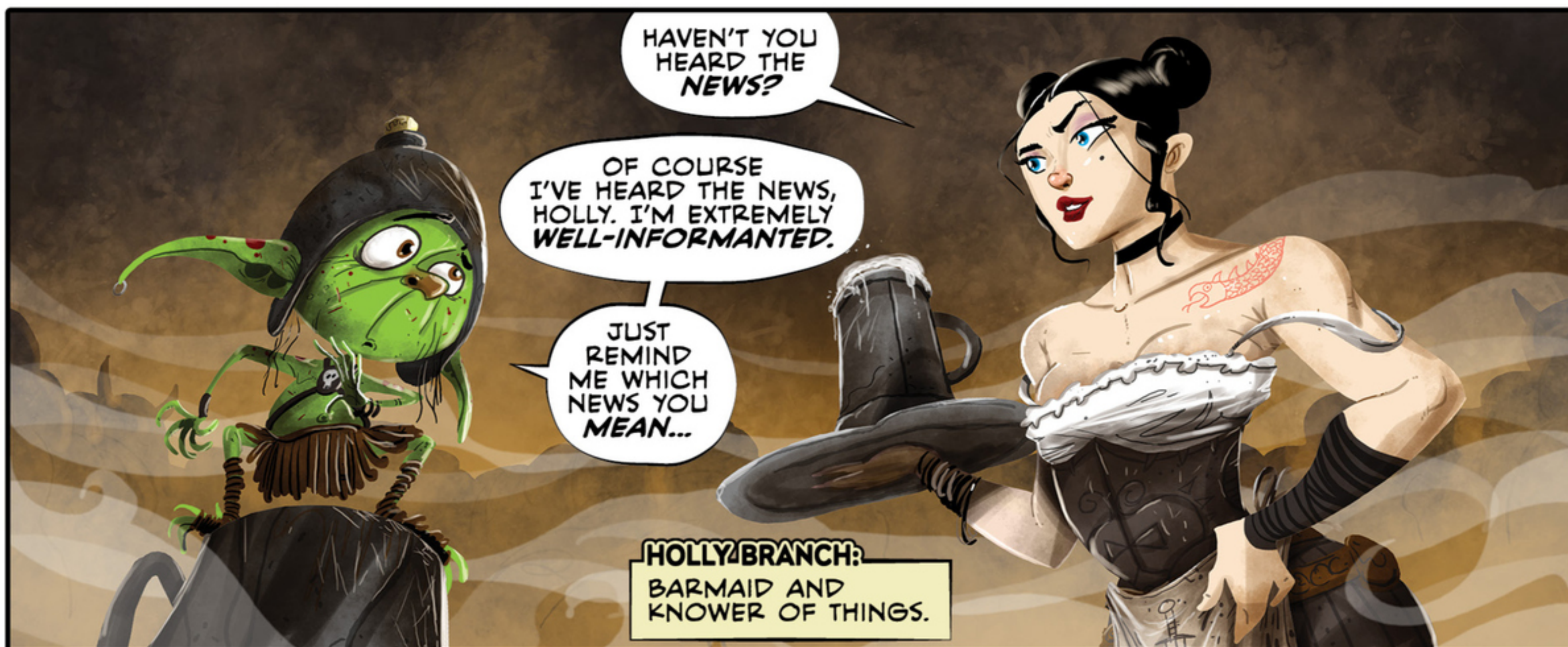
THAT'S  
ACTUALLY NOT  
**REASSURING...**

YOU TWO  
WERE A BAD  
INVESTMENT, AND I'M  
**REVOKING YOUR**  
**CONTRACT.**  
**BYE!**











KING DED IS DEAD.  
HE DROWNED IN A  
WINE BARREL WITH  
NO HEIRS.

NICE  
DEATH IF  
YOU CAN  
GET IT.

"FIVE FACTIONS HAVE ALL SPRUNG UP TO  
CLAIM THE **THRONE**. THEY HAVE ARMIES OF  
**GOBLINS**, **DWARVES**, **DOPPELGANGERS**,  
**KNIGHTS**, AND THE **UNDEAD**.

"EDWANDO THE  
WIZARD. **GOBLINS**  
FOLLOW HIS KOOKY  
MAGICAL BELIEFS.  
THEY'RE ALL STUPID.

"**QUEEN BUTTERNUT**. SHE  
PUT ALL HER STRENGTH  
INTO A **DWARF** MILITARY.  
MAYBE A LITTLE STUPID?

"**ASH THE LESSER**.  
A ROYAL WHO WANTS TO  
WATCH THE WORLD BURN,  
THE **DOPPELGANGERS**  
ARE DOWN TO HELP HIM  
ELIMINATE SOME HUMANS  
TO MAKE THEIR JOBS  
EASIER...

"**LADY LUMPSE**. SHE'S  
SKILLED IN THE ARTS OF  
COURTLY LOVE, AND MANY  
**KNIGHTS** HAVE PLEDGED  
LOYALTY TO HER MESSAGE  
OF LOVE AND PEACE  
(WHICH WILL COME RIGHT  
AFTER THE VIOLENT PURGE  
OF THE REALM).

"**LORD GLIMMER**. A  
WEALTHY ARISTOCRAT,  
HE COMMANDS A  
WELL-FUNDED ARMY  
OF THE **UNDEAD**.  
GROSS."

"WHAT ABOUT THE  
KING'S FABLED  
TWIN NIECES?"

"THEY'RE  
FABLED."

"OH,  
RIGHT."







LOTS OF  
FACTIONS VYING  
FOR THE THRONE!  
WONDERFUL!  
**STUPIDENOUS!**

WHO SHOULD  
WE **MURDER**  
**FIRST?** WHO'S  
**EXPENSIVE?**

...

HAVE  
YOU GIVEN  
IT ANY  
**THOUGHT,**  
DOP?

WE WERE **BORN** FOR  
THIS! WE COULD HELP THE  
NEXT RULER **CLAIM** THE  
**THRONE!** AND **WE CLAIM**  
THE **RICHES!**

HAVE  
YOU FIGURED  
OUT **WHICH**  
**FACTION--?**

...

OH.  
**THAT**  
**ONE?**

I WANT TO  
TO KILL PEOPLE  
FOR MONEY

THE **WIZARD**  
**EDWANDO,**  
HUH? THAT'S  
COOL.

HE ALREADY  
HAS AN **ARMY**  
OF **GOBLINS,** SO I  
THOUGHT WE'D JOIN  
UP SOMEWHERE I'D  
STAND OUT MORE,  
BUT...WHATEVER.  
I TRUST YOUR  
**JUDGMENT...**



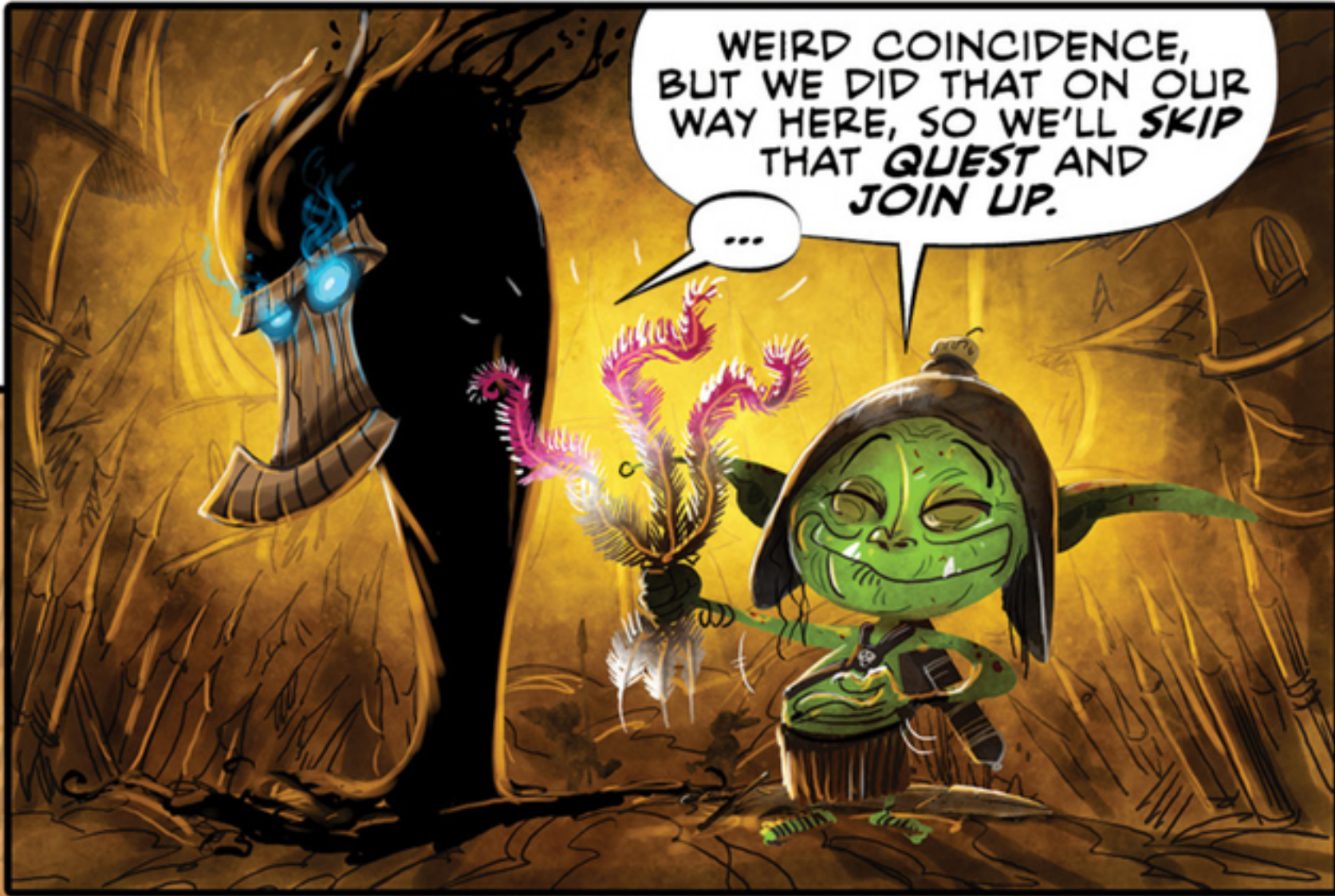






HERE'S ONE:

TO PROVE YOUR COURAGE IN BATTLE, YOU MUST RETRIEVE **THREE FEATHERS** FROM THE MYTHICAL BEAGLE EAGLE HIGH ATOP BIRD DOG MOUNTAIN.



WEIRD COINCIDENCE, BUT WE DID THAT ON OUR WAY HERE, SO WE'LL **SKIP** THAT **QUEST** AND **JOIN UP**.

...



NOPE. **DOESN'T COUNT**.

**WHAT?** ARE YOU **CRAZY?** THEN WHAT ARE WE SUPPOSED TO **DO?**

**GO FIGHT HIM.**



**AN OGRE.** LIKE A GOBLIN EXCEPT **GIANT**.

OKAY, DOP, I'LL FIGHT HIS **LEFT LEG**. YOU TAKE THE **REST**.

...



**BWAK**

ON SECOND THOUGHT, MAYBE I'LL JUST TAKE HIS **LEFT FOOT** AND--**OOF!**





HELLO, MY  
LOYAL GOBLIN  
FOLLOWERS!

AS YOU KNOW,  
I AM THE **WIZARD  
EDWANDO**, AND  
I'D LIKE TO REMIND  
YOU THAT I'M **JUST  
LIKE YOU** EXCEPT  
**BETTER** IN EVERY  
WAY.



REMEMBER,  
AS A WIZARD, MY  
**MAGIC** IS ONLY  
AS STRONG AS  
YOUR **BELIEF**.

SO SHOW YOUR  
BELIEF BY GIVING  
ME YOUR MONEY,  
RUBBING MY FEET,  
AND **KILLING MY  
ENEMIES!**



SOME PEOPLE  
SAY GOBLINS ARE  
**NOT SMART**  
BECAUSE YOU  
DECIDED TO JOIN  
THE **CULT OF  
EDWANDO...**

BUT I  
SAY THERE  
ARE **MANY  
REASONS**  
YOU'RE **NOT  
SMART!**

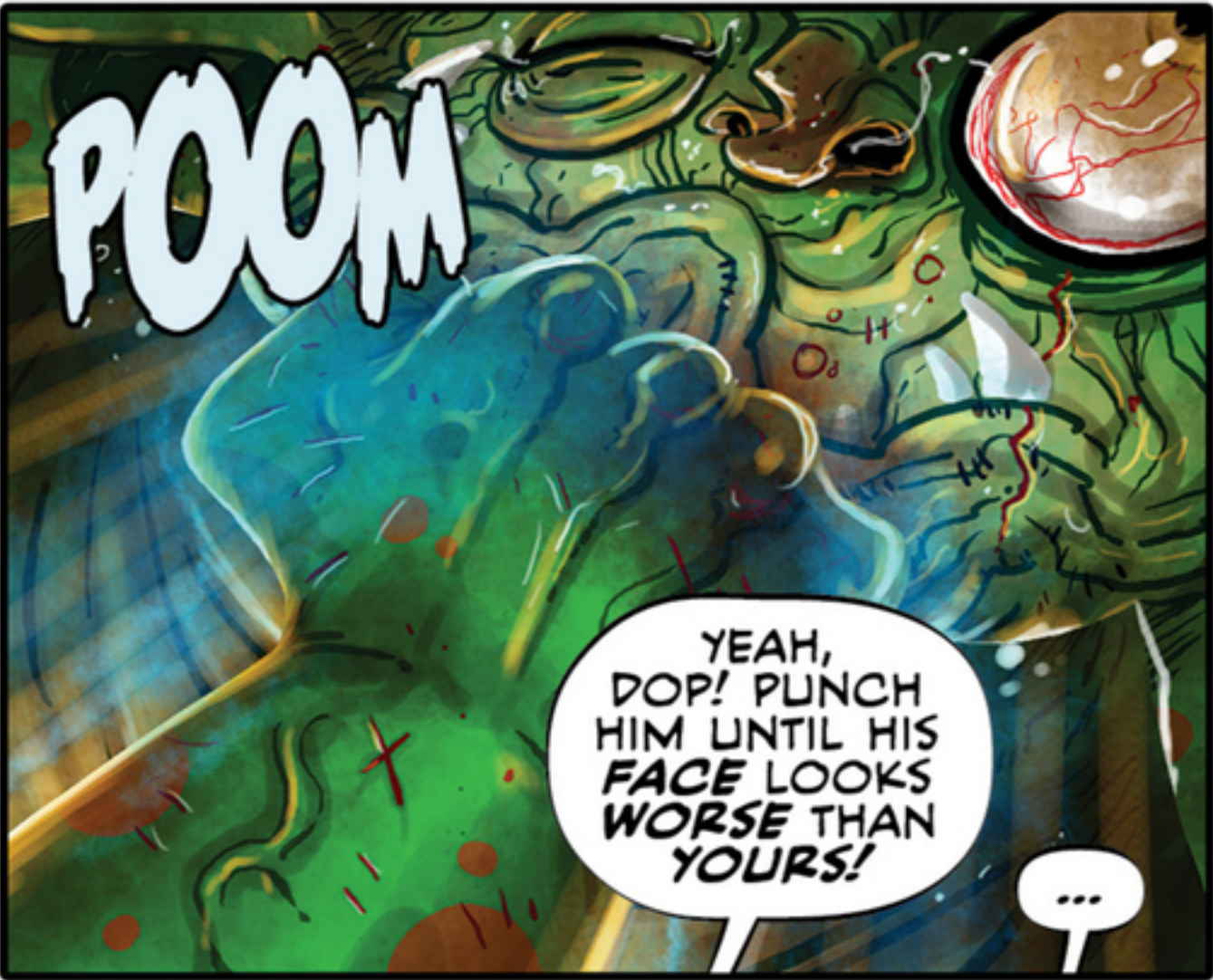


WE SHALL  
NOW BEGIN  
OUR **CEREMONIAL  
FIREWORKS SHOW**  
TO CELEBRATE  
LIFE OR ME OR  
WHATEVER.

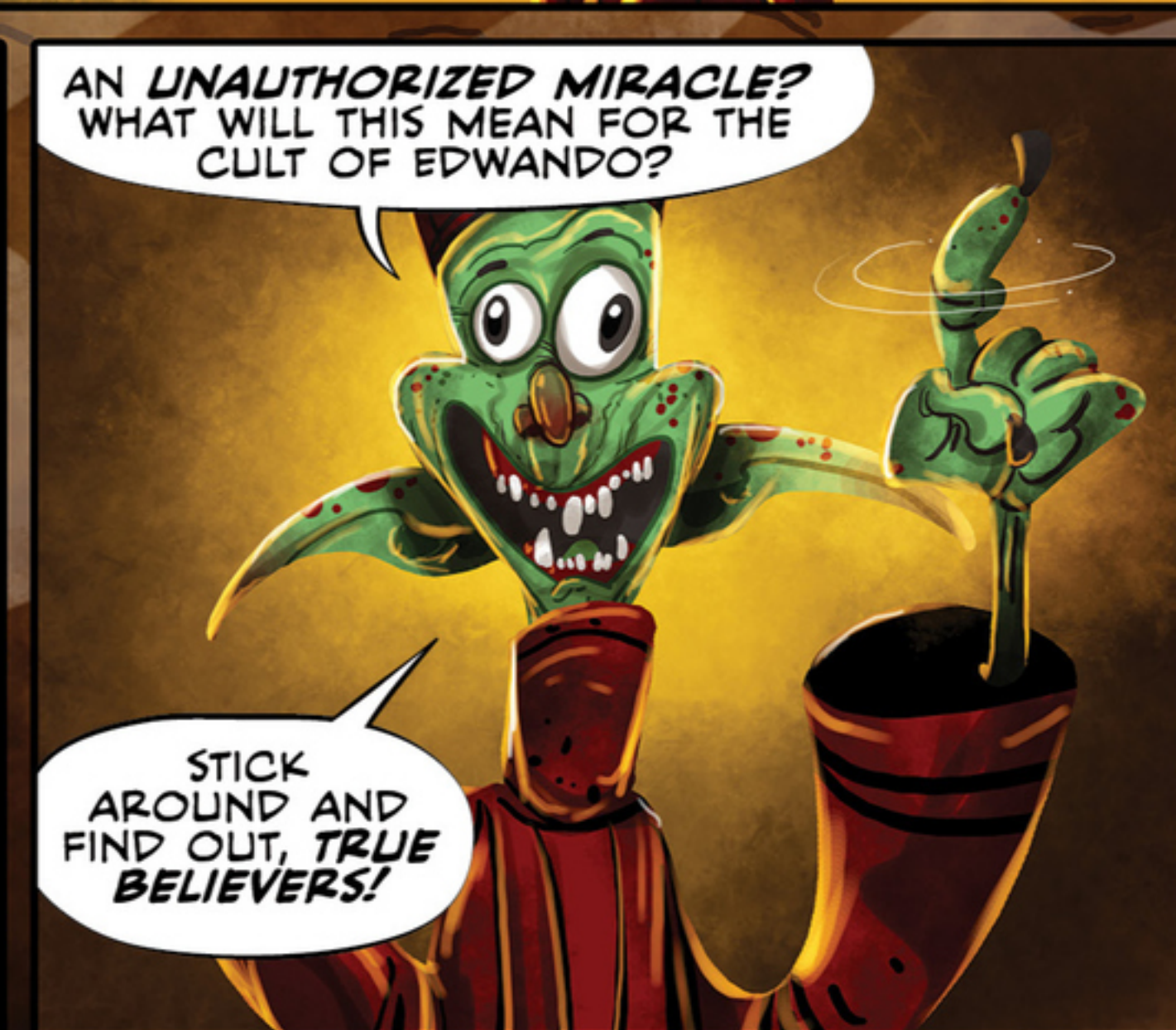
I HOPE  
YOU ALL FIND  
IT TO BE...  
**MAGICAL!**
















I CAN  
NO LONGER  
BELIEVE WHAT  
I BELIEVED  
BEFORE!

I'M NOW A  
REFORMED  
PRESTIDIGITARIAN!

I'M NOT FALLING  
FOR THE *HYPE*. I'M  
STAYING IN THE  
CULT OF EDWANDO  
OF LATTER-DAY  
WIZARDS.

NOT ME!  
I'M JOINING THE  
SEVENTH DAY  
CONJURISTS!

GRETCHEN!  
I HOPE WE'LL SEE  
YOU AT THE *UNIVERSAL  
ILLUSIONIST* CULT PICNIC  
TONIGHT WITH SOME  
OF YOUR DELICIOUS  
*PORCUPINE PIE*.

BLESS YOUR  
HEART, BUT I ONLY  
ATTEND *ILLUSION  
UNIVERSALIST* CULT  
PICNICS NOW, GRETA.  
AND YOU SHOULD  
LAY OFF THE  
*PIE*, DEAR.

MY FAMILY  
IS ALL *ORTHODOX  
INCANTATIONIST*!

*BORED  
AGAIN* *ORTHODOX  
INCANTATIONIST*...

I SAY WE'RE  
TRADITIONALIST  
NECROMANCERS.

NO, SIR. WE'RE  
NECROMENNONITES.





LISTEN TO ME,  
MY **OCCULTIST**  
**BRETHREN** AND  
**OCCULTIST**  
**CISTERN!**

REMEMBER  
OUR **VALUES!**  
WHICH ARE ALL  
ABOUT **ME!**



LOOK, DOP, THEY  
ALREADY SET UP  
**FACTIONS** BASED  
ON WHO THEY  
**EXCLUDE!**

...  
I KNOW,  
RIGHT? THE  
**JOY OF**  
**SECTS...**



YOU STUPID  
**CULTISTS** JUST  
AREN'T BEING  
**RATIONAL!**

THIS  
WHOLE THING  
IS **NOT** THE  
END OF THE  
WORLD!

YES,  
IT **IS!** YOU'RE  
TALKING TO THE  
**DOOMSDAY**  
**APOSTOLIC**  
**CULT!**

NO, THE  
**EXTINCTIONARIANS!**

NO, THE  
**TEMPLE OF**  
**DOOM!**



YOU'RE  
**CRAZY!** WHO'D  
HAVE THOUGHT  
ANYBODY'D BE  
**DUMB** ENOUGH TO  
BELIEVE THEIR  
BELIEFS?

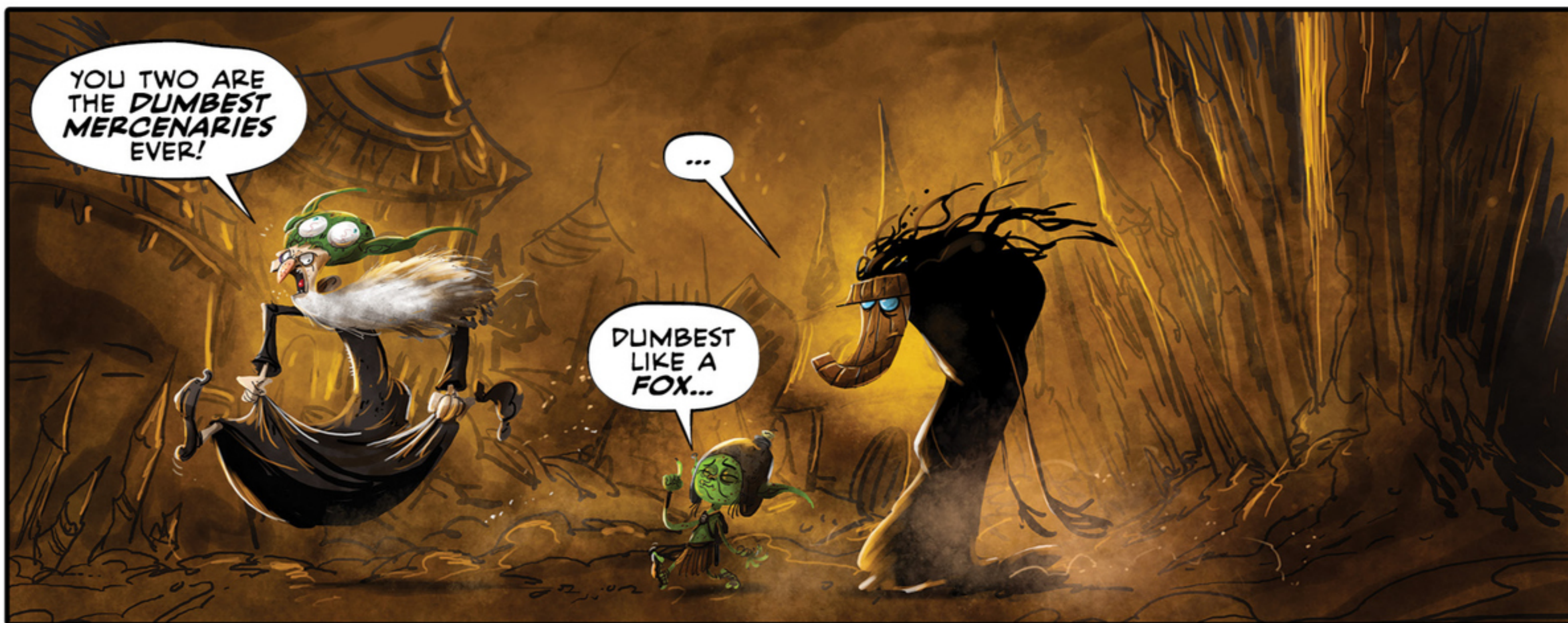
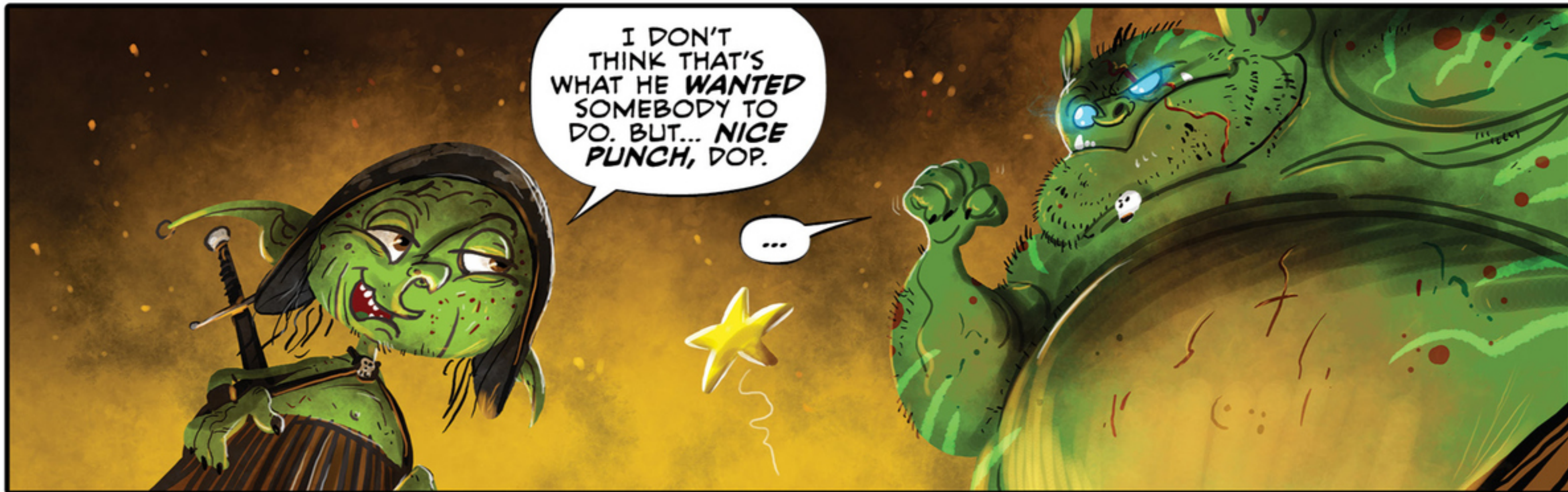
SOMEBODY DO  
SOMETHING!



SOMEBODY DO  
SOMETHING!  
**URK!**

**KRAK**







STOP! DON'T!  
LOOK, LET'S  
NEGOTIATE!

YOUR DONATIONS  
ARE **TAX-DEDUCTIBLE!**  
I DON'T CARE IF YOU  
EAT **MEAT** ON FRIDAYS!  
DON'T HURT  
**MEEEEEEEE!**

I HAVE A WHOLE NEW  
**PHILOSOPHICAL  
QUESTION:**

NOW WHO'S  
GOING TO  
**PAY US?**

...

WAIT! **MIRACLE  
MERCENARIES!** WE  
NEED NEW **LEADERS!**  
TELL US WHAT TO  
**BELIEVE!**

WHAT,  
ARE YOU  
**CRAZY?**

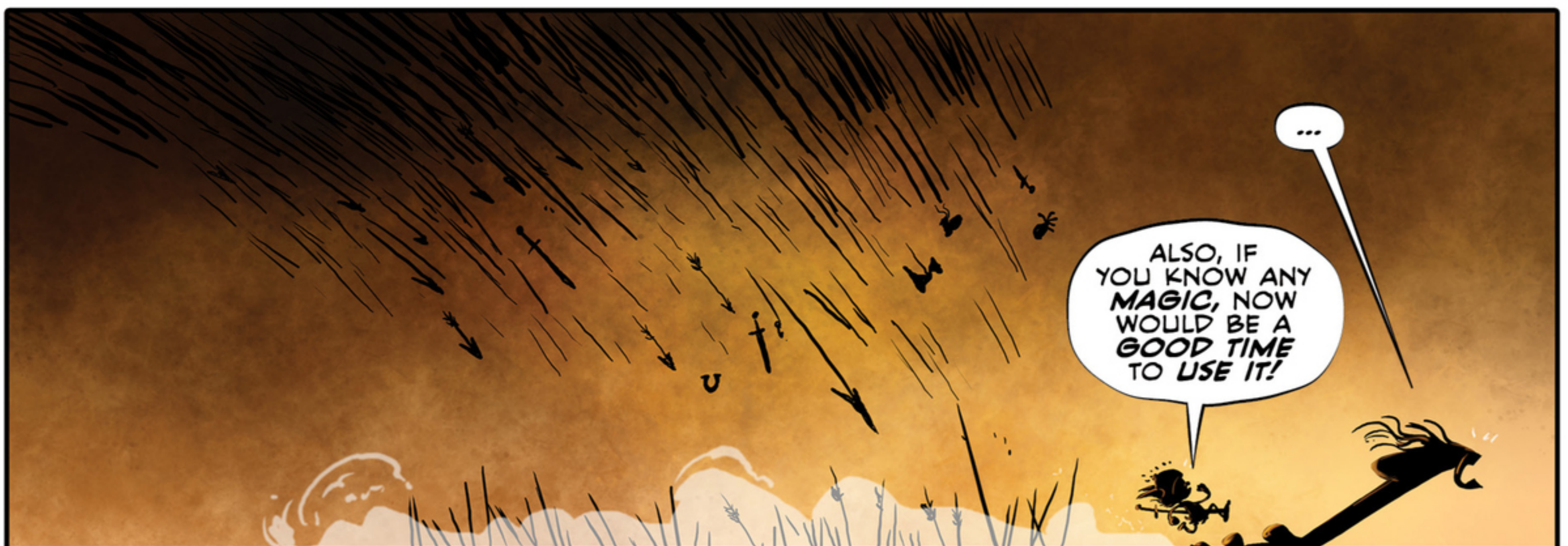
...

UH, **GOOD POINT.**  
LOOK WHAT THEY  
DID TO THE LAST  
PERSON TO CALL  
THEM **CRAZY...**

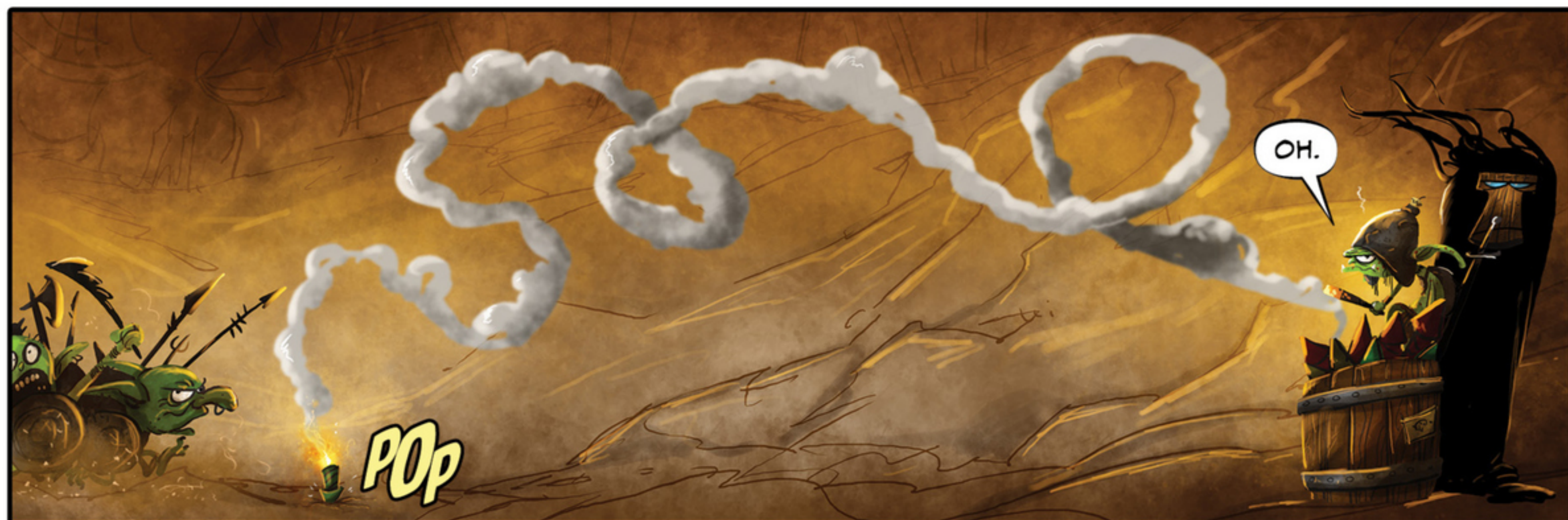
YOU  
WANT SOME  
**LEADERSHIP?**  
TRY THIS:

FEEL **GUILTY**  
ALL DAY, DON'T  
BOTHRER ME WITH  
YOUR **DUMB  
QUESTIONS,** AND  
KEEP THOSE  
**OFFERINGS**  
COMING!

















THESE TWO  
CAME FROM  
EDWANDO'S  
CAMP.

SHOULD WE  
**INTERROGATE**  
THEM?

DON'T  
**BOTHER.**  
JUST **KILL**  
THEM.



WE ARE DEALING  
WITH THE MILITARY  
MIGHT OF THE ENTIRE  
**DWARF ARMY.** THAT  
MEANS **CERTAIN**  
**DEATH.**

...

DO  
YOU THINK  
THEY'RE  
**HIRING?**